

AMCIS Site and Team Selection Procedures and Criteria

The purpose of this document is to provide potential AMCIS bidders with information on the bid process. While there are many components of AMCIS that are the direct responsibility of the Conference Committee, there are many aspects that must adhere to the respective practices that are described in this document. Running a large conference such as AMCIS is complex, and the experience from previous chairs and administrators embedded in this document should be leveraged. The opportunity to give the community a valuable learning experience should be considered an honor, while at the same time be a rewarding experience for the entire Conference Committee.

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General Information

The Americas Conference on Information Systems (AMCIS) is an annual research conference in the information systems discipline held in North, Central, and South America. Each year AMCIS attracts around 800 attendees principally from North America but increasingly from other regions of the world. It is conducted under the auspices of the Association for Information Systems (AIS). AIS academic members with leadership experience take responsibility for organizing the Conference, with significant support from AIS staff members.

AMCIS is held around the first or second week of August each year. The conference dates should be selected to avoid overlapping with Academy of Management meetings. An opening reception is typically held on the first evening of the conference, and a social event is held on the last evening of the conference.

In addition to over 20 parallel paper sessions, a number of other events have traditionally been scheduled in conjunction with AMCIS including:

- Doctoral Consortium: Provides an opportunity for doctoral students to receive guidance from prominent academics.
- MIS Camp: Provides career advice for new MIS faculty.
- Workshops: Provide tutorials on new and innovative ideas in research and teaching. Can generate additional revenue.
- Panels: Offers facilitated discussion groups comprised of academic and/or practitioner leaders.
- CIO Symposium: Provides academics and practitioners an opportunity to collaborate and share perspectives on IT. Can be used to generate additional revenue by attracting sponsors or charging additional fees to executive participants.
- Keynote Speakers: Provide opportunities for attendees to hear a recognized leader.
- Ancillary Meetings: Support additional groups including SIGs and the ISDSA Project.
- Job Placement: Provides universities with an opportunity to interview candidates for open positions.
- Other innovative ideas are welcome.

The AMCIS Executive Committee is responsible for recommending the site and leadership teams for future Conferences to the AIS Council by following these AMCIS Site and Team Selection Procedures. Ideally, at its annual August meeting (held prior to the AMCIS Conference), the AMCIS Executive Committee selects the site for a future conference five years in advance, and one leadership team from among those bidding four years in advance of the date of each Conference (i.e., locations for AMCIS in August of year X will be considered in year X-5, and bids from teams wishing to lead AMCIS in August of year X will be considered in August of year X-4). The AMCIS EC recommends the selected site and team to the AIS Council, which makes the final decision. A general outline for geographic rotation of AMCIS is available on the AIS web site (www.aisnet.org). This outline gives the desired geographic region for each year. Exceptions to this rotation may be considered if necessary.

AMCIS Site Advisory Committee (SAC)

The AMCIS Site Advisory Committee (SAC) solicits ideas for locations in which to hold AMCIS and bids from leaders interesting in hosting AMCIS, they assist Bid Committees in developing bids, and advises the AMCIS Executive Committee on the merits of each bid. It is comprised of the following five individuals, all members of the Conferences Committee:

- AIS Vice President of Conferences (Chair)
- A former Chair of an AMCIS Conference
- The Chair of the AMCIS Executive Committee/Region 1 Representative
- A former Program Chair of an AMCIS Conference
- AIS Executive Director
- AIS Conference Director

If any of the individuals listed above are ineligible or decline to be members of the SAC, the AIS Vice President of Conferences will appoint a replacement with the experience and expertise to provide high-quality advice and feedback to Bid Committees and the AMCIS Executive Committee.

A SAC member may not be directly or indirectly associated with any bid being considered by SAC. A SAC or AMCIS Executive Committee member may not accept any gifts, benefits, or other considerations from any party in connection with any bid being considered.

SAC Responsibilities

The SAC has four main responsibilities:

1. The SAC has the responsibility of soliciting ideas for locations for AMCIS (through period surveys and/or calls for suggestions from AIS members), narrowing the possible cities/venues based on data compiled by the AIS Conference Director to a few, and recommending these site options to the AMCIS EC. Neither the Bid Committees nor the SAC will solicit information from hotels or conference facilities at bid locations. Rather, this activity will be the responsibility of the AIS Conference Director.
2. The SAC has the responsibility of soliciting leaders or leadership teams to bid to chair AMCIS in the chosen location. The Chair of SAC will coordinate the efforts of the members of SAC in soliciting bids. Members of SAC will contact individuals who might be interested in forming Bid Committees and will invite them to bid. Individuals not contacted by the SAC are encouraged to bid but should contact the SAC Chair for advice on bidding.
3. The SAC has the responsibility of assisting Bid Committees in preparing and revising bids. Prior to bid deadlines, Bid Committees are encouraged to contact the SAC with questions about bidding. During the bid process, the SAC will provide feedback to Bid Committees as outlined in the schedule below.
4. The SAC has the responsibility of advising the AMCIS Executive Committee on the strengths and weaknesses of each bid as outlined in the schedule below.

Site and Leadership Team Selection Schedule

The following schedule for selecting the site and leadership team for AMCIS in year X will be followed in year X-5 and X-4 unless modified by the Site Advisory Committee (SAC) Chair:

In Year X-5

- By 15 March: The SAC begins to discuss a list of cities to be researched with the AIS Conference Director. Based on information collected by the Conference Director, cities are eliminated and/or additional cities are considered.
- At the April AMCIS Executive Committee (EC) meeting, possible cities are discussed and some may be removed and more may be added.

- By 1 July: The SAC submits a short list of candidate cities and their possible conference venues (e.g., hotels and/or conference centers) to the members of the AMCIS EC, with supporting data. Additional cities may be added by the SAC based on feedback from the EC.
- At the August AMCIS EC meeting, the SAC presents a short list of cities and summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate locations. The AMCIS EC selects zero, one or two preferred cities. If no cities are selected, the SAC will prepare a schedule for reviewing additional information on candidate cities or considering cities in other geographic locations.
- By 1 November: the SAC solicits Intent to Bid letters from prospective teams to lead AMCIS in the city or cities selected by the AMCIS EC.
- At the December meeting of the AMCIS EC, the SAC summarizes the Intent to Bid letters and the AMCIS EC selects zero, one or two. The SAC informs bidders of the outcome and invites teams to submit Preliminary Bids.

In Year X-4:

- By 1 February: Bid Chairs prepare a Preliminary Bid and send it as an email attachment to the SAC Chair. The Preliminary Bid must be in Word or pdf format.
- By 15 February: SAC assesses each Preliminary Bid and the SAC Chair provides Bid Chairs with feedback and bid changes requested. The SAC Chair informs all prospective bidders of the other teams that are competing for AMCIS. Only the names of General Conference Chairpersons will be provided.
- By 15 March: Bid chairs submit revised Preliminary Bids, if requested, to the SAC Chair. SAC Chair sends (revised) Preliminary Bids to the voting members of the AMCIS Executive Committee.
- At the April AMCIS EC meeting, the AMCIS Executive Committee meets to consider the Preliminary Bids. The SAC summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of each Preliminary Bid for the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee select zero, one, or two bids whose Bid Committees will be invited to prepare and present a Full Bid at the August meeting of the AMCIS Executive Committee. AMCIS Executive Committee Chair provides Bid Chairs with feedback on their bids. Each Bid Chair is informed as to whether or not they are invited to prepare and present their Full Bid at the August meeting of the AMCIS Executive Committee. If no teams are selected to prepare Full Bids, the SAC will open the process to new bids and prepare a schedule for reviewing them.
- By 1 June: Bid Chairs send Full Bids as an email attachment to the SAC Chair. The Full Bid must be in Word or pdf format
- By 15 June: SAC assesses each Full Bid and the SAC Chair provides feedback to Bid Chairs as to suggested changes.
- By 1 August: Bid Chairs finalize Full Bids and send them as email attachments to the SAC Chair. SAC Chair sends Full Bids to the voting members of AMCIS Executive Committee.
- At the August meeting of AMCIS Executive Committee in year X-4 for conferences in year X: Invited Bid Chairs present their Bids to the AMCIS Executive Committee. Twenty minutes maximum is allowed for the presentation with a question period of no more than 10 minutes. The SAC summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the bids for the AMCIS

Executive Committee. The AMCIS Executive Committee selects zero, one, or two proposals to recommend to the AIS Council. The AMCIS Executive Committee Chair notifies each Bid Chair as to the success of their bid and provides feedback regarding the basis for the Committee's decision. The AMCIS Executive Committee Chair sends the selected bids to the AIS President along with the AMCIS Executive Committee's recommendation for the selected bid(s). If no bids are considered acceptable, the AMCIS Executive Committee will defer its decision until acceptable bids are received. In this case the SAC will open the process to new bids, including bids from regions not in the geographic rotation, and prepare a schedule for reviewing them.

- At a subsequent meeting of AIS Council: The AIS Council reviews the selected bid(s), the recommendation from the AMCIS Executive Committee, and a report of a site visit by the AIS Conference Director and decides on the site for AMCIS in year X.

Site Selection Proposal

The main criteria that AIS members have told us they use in evaluating conference locations are (in order) (1) affordability, 2) overall desirability of the city ("been there and liked it or "want to go there"), 3) "big cities," 4) "dining/shopping options," 5) "weather in August" and 6) "cultural attractions." The portfolio of information provided to the AMCIS EC to support the selection of the future conference site should include the following

- The city proposed. Returning to a city in which the conference has been held in the past is not precluded. Information on the weather in August, how affordable it is to get to and eat or drink in the city, the availability of nearby dining/shopping options or cultural attractions should be provided. Location of major airport(s) relative to the site must be given and transportation options from the airport(s) to the site should be explained.
- The dates during which conference venues (hotels or conference centers) are available, if this is known. If possible, the conference dates should be selected to avoid overlapping with Academy of Management meetings.
- Facilities. A brief description of the hotels and/or conference centers where the meeting may be held, with brief comments with respect to how the available option(s) would provide an attractive setting for the conference. The ideal AMCIS location will be a single hotel that has sufficient meeting space for the entire AMCIS footprint – all sessions, lunches, and social events, as well as pre- and post-conference events – and that is designed to promote between-session networking. The expected hotel costs should be provided, as should the number of hotel rooms in each hotel option. To accommodate attendees on a limited budget, a few nearby low cost hotels should be identified. A map indicating the location of all options (hotels and conference facilities) should be provided.

Additional information:

A city with more than one venue that will accommodate the AMCIS footprint will help the Conference Director obtain the best possible room rates and overall hotel agreement. However, a city with only one venue may be proposed, or a city where a combination of

hotels will be needed to accommodate the conference. The conference hotel(s) must be located in close proximity to amenities such as shops, theaters, restaurants, pubs and so forth. Hotels requiring taxis, public transportation, or a long walk to reach such attractions should not be proposed.

If exceptions to the normal AMCIS event footprint will be needed, that will be made very clear to the AMCIS EC.

Preliminary Bid

The Preliminary Bid shall not exceed three pages and shall include the following:

- Proposed Conference Chair (or Co-chairs) and Program Chair (or Co-chairs). For these chairpersons list significant AIS, AMCIS, ICIS, or other major Information Systems conference leadership or organizational experiences.
- A summary of the Bid Committee's ideas for improving AMCIS from the perspective of the participant. What is it about your team, your institutions, your industry connections, your program plans, your keynote speaker criteria, your panel ideas, your social event ideas, your pre-conference event ideas or any other aspect of your vision for the conference that will make this AMCIS special? Please give us your ideas for enhancing the intellectual stimulation and networking opportunities that AMCIS submitters, reviewers and attendees will experience. We realize that some of your goals or ideas will be wildly premature at this point, and we know that they may not come to fruition, but please help us understand how you would envision making this conference successful.
- A summary of the Bid Committee's ideas for exploiting their selected city and conference venue. How will the strengths of the city and conference facilities be exploited and their weaknesses overcome? Please give us your ideas on how to use the city and venue to full advantage.

For more detail on the above, see the Full Bid section, which follows. Examples of previously accepted bids can be requested from the SAC Chair.

Preliminary Bid Evaluation Criteria

The SAC and the AMCIS Executive Committee will consider the following criteria in evaluating a Preliminary Bid:

1. The Bid Committee: The experience of the conference and program chairs, their commitment to AIS and AMCIS, the diversity of the team.
2. The Bid Committee's Ideas: The novelty and relevance of the team's ideas for improving the AMCIS experience for all stakeholders.
3. The Bid Committee's ideas about exploiting the city and conference facilities to create a superior experience for all attendees.

Full Bid (by invitation only)

The Full Bid will describe, explain, and provide details in support of the main elements listed below. A Full Bid may also include details on other bid-related matters that the Bid Committee feels will help the AMCIS Executive Committee reach a decision.

The Full Bid (including an executive summary) must not exceed 20 pages (U.S. letter size) including appendices. Bid leader contact details (e-mail, phone numbers, fax numbers, mailing address) should be included.

The Full Bid should include the following elements:

Conference City

The team should draw on the material prepared earlier regarding the proposed conference city and elaborate on it as they see fit. How will the strengths of the city be exploited and how will its weaknesses be overcome to accomplish the team's goals for the conference? How will the city be promoted to attendees? What opportunities exist for holding social events? Are there nearby tourist attractions? If it is not already obvious, how will attendees travel to the city?

Conference Dates

Proposed dates of the conference and ancillary meetings, which usually reflect hotel or conference center availability, should be given. Any known conflicts with other conferences and meetings (e.g., AoM) should be identified.

Conference Committee

All conference chairs should be listed along with details of their prior experience with conferences administration. At a minimum, the following conference chairs must be identified:

- Conference Chair(s)
- Program Chair(s)
- Doctoral Consortium Chair(s)
- MIS Camp Director(s)

Other conference committee members may also be identified.

The Bid need only "sketch" the experience of each member of the proposed Conference Committee. A paragraph on each emphasizing significant conference administrative involvements, especially those which include AMCIS, will suffice. The leadership experience of the Conference Chair(s) and the scholarly accomplishments of the Program Chair(s) and Doctoral Consortium Chairs are also relevant.

Additional information:

The quality of the Conference Committee proposed in support of the bid is a critical factor in securing a favorable result. The Conference Chair, Program Chair, Doctoral Consortium Chair, and MIS Camp Director should have extensive prior experience with conferences, ideally

AMCIS, in some administrative or organizing capacity. As a group, they should be able to demonstrate experience with, interest in, and a commitment to AMCIS. Committee positions such as Honorary Chair, Vice Chair, or Advisory Committee may be included but the role of individuals in these positions should be explained in the bid document.

Where two or more persons share a position, they will be known as Co-Chairs. Each will assume all responsibilities and obligations of the position. If a bid has Conference Co-Chairs, one must agree to serve as Chair of the AMCIS Executive Committee, on future SAC committees, on the Conferences Committee, and on AIS Council at the appropriate time if the bid is successful.

The Program Chair must be an established scholar in the discipline and be capable of judging the quality of scholarship in a broad range of relevant topics. The Program Chair must be willing and able to build a Program Committee that draws strongly on the scholarly information systems community. The Program Chair must also be willing to serve as an AMCIS Track Chair (or Track Co-Chair) in the year preceding their conference, if so invited by the preceding year's Program Chair. Similarly, the Program Chair (or one of the Program Co-Chairs) must be willing to serve on the AMCIS Executive Committee in the years prior to, during and following their conference. The Program Chair must agree to use the AIS-approved Web-based peer review system.

The Doctoral Consortium Chair must be an established scholar in the discipline and be capable of attracting and organizing a highly-competent consortium faculty with experience advising PhD students. Ideally, the Chair will have served as a consortium faculty member previously and be well-acquainted with the objectives and consortium process.

The MIS Camp Director should be senior faculty with experience mentoring junior faculty. The MIS Camp Director accepts responsibility for organizing the MIS Camp as a pre-conference event and for inviting respected scholars to participate as presenters and facilitators.

The proposed Conference Chair assumes the important responsibility of ensuring that every member of the Bid Committee understands and accepts their responsibilities as a member of the AMCIS Conference Committee, should their Full Bid be accepted, and subsequent responsibilities, should they become a member of the AMCIS Executive Committee.

The right of the Conference Chair to choose the makeup of her/his Conference Committee is acknowledged. However, each Program Chair can strengthen AMCIS by agreeing to provide training for the Program Chair of the conference for the year following their own conference. This may be achieved by inviting the Program Chair for the year following to serve as a track chair. Program Chairs can also learn the process by submitting mini-track proposals and serving as a reviewer for AMCIS in the years leading up to their conference. This vital form of "knowledge transfer" will help ensure that each Program Committee is knowledgeable regarding peer-review procedures and they are ready to assume this very important function.

The right of the Doctoral Consortium Chair to choose her/his Consortium faculty members is acknowledged. However, for the reason explained in the previous paragraph, the Doctoral Consortium Chair should provide experience and training for the Doctoral Consortium Chair for the year following by inviting that Chair to serve as a member of their Consortium faculty.

The right of the MIS Camp Chair to choose her/his MIS Camp faculty members is acknowledged. However, for the reason explained previously, the MIS Camp Chair may provide experience and training for the MIS Camp Chair for the year following by inviting that Chair to serve as a member of their MIS Camp faculty.

Hotel and Conference Facilities

The team should draw on the material prepared earlier and elaborate it so that bid evaluators can visualize the conference experience, especially with regard to any proposed conference innovations. Pertinent material about hotel and/or conference center options should be included and updated -- e.g., the map of the hotel or conference facilities, hotel room rates. Specific strengths or defects of the facilities should be noted and the bid team should outline their strategies for exploiting strengths and compensating for weaknesses. For example, if it is necessary to use multiple hotels to accommodate all attendees, how does the team propose to create additional opportunities for networking? If there are constraints on the available meeting or lunch space, how does the team plan to deal with these?

Doctoral Consortium Plans

Describe any innovations you are proposing in the design of the Doctoral Consortium that will enhance its value to participants. The location, description, capacity, and rental cost of at least one Doctoral Consortium site must be given. The AIS Conference Director will assist the Bid Committee in determining whether the meeting space available for the Doctoral Consortium is appropriate and adequate for any innovations they have in mind.

Additional information:

The Doctoral Consortium may be held in the conference hotel or in another facility removed from the conference hotel. If removed from the hotel, transportation to and from the hotel should be explained. In recent years, the doctoral consortium has been expanded and divided into two parallel and connected tracks, one for "junior" or pre-dissertation students and one for "senior" or dissertation-stage students, each with about 40 students and 12 faculty mentors. The Doctoral Consortium is no more than one day long, perhaps starting the day before the conference with an informal dinner but definitely ending before paper sessions begin.

MIS Camp Plans

Describe any innovations in the design of the Doctoral Consortium that will enhance its value to participants. The location, description, capacity, and rental cost of at least one MIS Camp site must be given. The AIS Conference Director will assist in determining whether the meeting space available for the MIS Camp is appropriate and adequate for any innovations they have in mind.

Additional information:

MIS Camp may be held in the conference hotel or in another facility removed from the conference hotel. If removed from the hotel, transportation to and from the hotel should be explained. Approximately 25 junior faculty and 8 senior faculty will attend. MIS Camp is no

more than one day long, perhaps starting the day before the conference with an informal dinner but definitely ending before paper sessions begin.

Ancillary Meetings Plans

Describe any innovations in ancillary meetings or pre- or post-conference workshops that will enhance the value of AMCIS to its stakeholders. (The AIS Conference Director will have already assessed the suitability of available facilities for ancillary meetings before or after the conference.) Facilities to support meetings of ancillary groups should be described. These meetings will include SIG meetings and the ISDSA Project meeting.

Conference Program Elements

The nature of the Conference experience that the Bid Committee envisions should be described. Given the very long lead time, the Full Bid need not propose a theme – which may be chosen a year or two prior to the conference. But the full bid should elaborate on the proposals of the Conference Committee for improving the experience of all AMCIS stakeholders -- submitting authors, those who review or otherwise contribute to the selection of submissions, and all attendees. How can this AMCIS be more intellectually stimulating and provide a better networking experience for everyone?

Additional information:

The Bid Committee should examine all programmatic elements of recent Conferences and seek advice from previous Conference Committees on the strengths and weaknesses of various program options such as tracks, panels, keynote speakers, poster sessions, roundtables, pre- and post-conference workshops, receptions, social events and the like.

Program Chairs have some latitude in choosing the format for the Conference scholarly program but must receive approval from the AMCIS Executive Committee for any major changes from the traditional design. SIGs are given the opportunity to develop program content through the submission of minitrack proposals and nominating track chairs. Specific details such as track topics need not be specified. The AMCIS Executive Committee's concern will be to evaluate whether the proposed program format is likely to attract attendees and whether it is likely to result in high-quality research and a diverse program being presented.

Attendance

Estimates of attendance will be provided by the AIS Office, based on history. However, any unusual factors that may affect attendance (positively or negatively) should be described. These could include, for example, a location that is particularly attractive and thus likely to attract a large attendance or a known conflict with another conference that may draw attendees away from AMCIS.

Budget

A pro forma budget must be developed and included in the Full Bid based on a template provided by the SAC and with the assistance of the AIS Finance Director and the AIS Conference Director. The template will include costs that are predetermined (fixed), such as attendee revenue expectations, expenses for the use of the review system, and expenses

associated with AIS Office personnel. The Bid Committee and/or the AIS Conference Director will jointly determine other costs and revenues for the Conference. Notes to the budget should identify any revenue or expense items that are likely to deviate significantly from the expected norm for AMCIS. For example, normally there is no charge for the use of meeting facilities in hotels. However, if facilities in a conference center must be rented, then the expected cost of these facilities must be identified in the budget and explained. Expected sponsorship revenue should be included in the pro forma budget only if sponsors provide a letter of provisional support, or if sponsorship for similar conferences is the norm, or under similar circumstances. If sponsorship is expected to cover specific costs, then both those costs and the corresponding sponsorship revenue should be included in the budget. Any unusual factors that may affect either revenue or expense in the budget must also be described. These could include, for example, significant revenue expected from an associated CIO event, a plan for a particularly expensive but desirable social event, additional transportation charges between hotels and conference facilities, or a donation of facilities or equipment. Normally, particularly expensive options will need to be covered by sponsorships.

Additional information:

Approximately 8 months before the conference, the AIS office will prepare a detailed budget for the Conference. The office will work with the Conference Committee and the AIS Conference Director to identify the costs of various budget items.

Sponsorship

The Full Bid should describe the Bid Committee's plans for soliciting sponsorship for the conference. Likely sponsors should be described. Any committed sponsors should be identified.

Additional information:

Sponsorship could be in monetary or in-kind gifts. The CIO Symposium can be used to entice vendors with the opportunity to interface with IT executives.

Social Event

One or more options for the social event should be described.

Additional information:

The social event is normally held on the night of the last day of the conference. It is a time for attendees to interact in a relaxed atmosphere. The social event should be planned to provide for maximum attendee interaction in an atmosphere that showcases the location of the conference. Facilities that are broken up and distributed are less desirable than spaces where it is easy for attendees to meet each other. Long performances that interfere with attendee socializing should be avoided. The location should be convenient to the hotels. The cost is a function of the respective budget and often driven by sponsorship revenue.

Full Bid Evaluation Criteria

The AMCIS Executive Committee will consider the following criteria in evaluating a Full Bid:

1. The Conference Committee: The experience of the chairs relative to their roles, their commitment to AIS and AMCIS, the diversity of the Conference Committee.
2. Conference program elements. The proposed program innovations and the likelihood that the program will draw a large number of attendees, stimulate stakeholder learning and afford networking opportunities.
3. The city and conference facilities: The bid committee's strategies for exploiting the strengths and compensating for the weaknesses of the city and conference facilities.
4. Financial factors. Any financial factors, including budget considerations and sponsorship plans that are likely to affect the conference.

Pre-conference Reporting Requirements

Once a bid is approved to host the Conference, key representatives of the Conference Committee must attend certain AMCIS Executive Meetings to present a verbal and written update on the status of their preparations for the Conference. In addition to enabling the AMCIS Executive Committee to monitor the progress of preparations for each Conference, attendance of the Conference and Program Chairs at these meetings keeps them apprised of matters that might affect the conduct of the conference.

Future conference chairs are also invited to attend pre-conference meetings at AMCIS and ICIS to meet the AIS staff members who will support them.

Contacts

Additional questions on preparing a Preliminary Bid or Full Bid may be directed to the Chair of the Site Advisory Committee or the current Chair of the AMCIS Executive Committee. Bidders are also invited to contact the [AIS Vice President of Conferences](#) and the [AIS Executive Director](#).

(Major revisions approved by AMCIS EC, August 2015; Timeline revisions approved by AMCIS EC, April 2016)